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L E T T E R

T O

Sir John Fielding, *Knight*.

ILLUSTRATED WITH A

Portrait of a MONSTER.

————— Whose parent was a rock,
And fierce HYRCANIAN tygers gave him suck.

DEDICATED TO

WILLIAM NASH, Esq.
LORD MAYOR,

AND THE

COURT OF ALDERMEN.

O BY ROBERT HOLLOWAY.

L O N D O N :

Printed for the AUTHOR,

And Sold by S. BLADON, No. 28, Pater-noster-row.

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ST JOHN FIELDING, KNIGHT.

ILLUSTRATED WITH A

Portrait of a Monster.

—WARRIOR WITH A
—SWORD, AND A SHIELD.

DEDICATED TO

WILLIAM, EARL OF MANSFIELD

LORD CHANCELLOR

AND THE

COURT OF ALDERMEN

OF THE CITY OF LONDON

BY ROBERT WOODWARD

OF THE CITY OF LONDON

PRINTED FOR J. DODD

AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIELD, IN ST. MARTIN'S LANE

(1743)

DEDICATION.
TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM NASH, ESQ.
LORD MAYOR.

AND THE
COURT OF ALDERMEN.

TO you; my Lord and Gentlemen, is committed the peace, tranquility, and welfare of the first city in the world; a trust of such importance, that constitutes you likewise the first magistrate-body in the universe.

To whom not only the most subordinate but opulent part of its inhabitants look up for protection, when their rights, liberties, and property are attacked; on a faithful discharge of this great duty on your part, depends one of the most inestimable blessings your fellow citizens can experience.

A 2

But

But the temper of the present times virtually destroys every measure proposed for public utility; we have a system of virtue started up amongst us within these ten years, which gives such latitude to pernicious PRETENDERS, as almost supercedes the intentions of REALITY.

From hence we see an ill-guided multitude heaping virtues on bad men, and vices on good.

However, my Lord and Gentlemen, it does not become my province to descant on patriotic deformity, or your rectitude.

Yet thus much, with infinite pain must be acknowledged, we have beheld repeated insults offered the present chief magistrate of this city, for no apparent reason, but that of his possessing virtues which the base instigator * of those evils is a mortal foe to.

It is in fact, my Lord and Gentlemen, no compliment to make you supervisors of the villains' chronicle, nor should I have laid it at your feet, but from a full assurance that every species of vice is obnoxious in your eyes, and that you will readily

* Read Mr. Wilkes's address to the livery of London, April 6th, 1772, apparently calculated to incense a licentious rabble, and to excite them to acts of brutal outrage against his Lordship.

exert

~~exert~~ your abilities to redress the grievances complained of.

From you, my Lord and Gentlemen, I claim a degree of credit, as I have, on a former and recent occasion, forwarned you of the contagion just entering your gates in the person of Bolland, then a candidate for the office of city marshal.

The subject of the annexed sheets is a direful disease, pregnant with mischief of a more epidemical and incurable nature, therefore requires a more cogent styptic.

Your judicious rejection of Bolland became eventually the just reward of his manifold offences; and I am happy, in this reflection, that my admonition prov'd seasonable.

And it is upon a similar principle that I now congratulate myself on being the mirror through which the hideous monster that occasions this address, is so conspicuously held up to public view, whose frightful shape may prove some security against his future carnage.

But in a work of this nature, the aid, strength, and concurrence of powers, like yours, must join the endeavours of an individual, or the best concerted plan will inevitably prove abortive.

To

To this end I do intreat your protection and assistance (on behalf of many oppressed and indigent persons) in bringing to condign punishment every villain of such preposterous magnitude as the following treatise describes.

I shall with such hopes pursue my intended plan *, regardless of the couched assassin, or open ruffian, with unremitting assiduity. In doing which I have no revenge to compleat, no personal pique or passion to gratify, but such as meets a full gratification in the accomplishment of every public good.—With this declaration, I beg leave to subscribe myself,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your most devoted servant,

Soho-square,
May 5th, 1772.

R. HOLLOWAY.

* The author is setting a subscription on foot for the relief of such miserable individuals as have been ruined in fame, beggared in fortune, or otherwise oppressed or rendered wretched, by the infernal machinations of the miscreants alluded to.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE many errors, and the false grammar, inseparable from a work so speedily begun and ended, must inevitably be the lot of the following letter; however, the author's intentions are far from any attempt at elegance of style; he contends but for the veracity of his subject, and leaves the critics task to such as shall think a replication either advantageous or convenient,——The eloquence of his illustrious opponents may indeed be so far necessary, as to add dignity to error, and gracefulness to mistakes.——The candid reader will consider, that the printers just objections to admit a farther controversy in the daily papers, gave birth to this letter.——

This

*This resolution was announced Friday the first instant *, from that time, to the ensuing Tuesday, only, the author allowed himself to collect and arrange the following materials.*

• Vide Morning Chronicle, May 1. 1772.

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rations to admit a further correction in the
copy before sent back to the printer. —

TO

T O

Sir John Fielding, *Knight*.

I COULD wish you, Sir John, to consider this address, not only as an indulgence I owe my own inclination, but a tribute of praise justly due to your unwearied attention to the public welfare.

Your vigilance and indefatigable pursuit after every species of robbers, bids us sleep, travel, and proceed in the ordinary concerns of life, with a degree of safety heretofore unknown.

To your penetration, activity, and integrity, we stand indebted for a removal of almost every public annoyance.

From your humanity and parental feeling for the deserted orphan, we view at once a safe asylum for indigence, and a seasonable augmentation to our naval strength.—But what avail these excellent qualities which adorn the man, and orna-

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ment

ment the magistrate—we live not in the Augustan age—almost every man arrogates to himself a system of probity, whilst right and wrong bear no distinction, but such as severally serve a particular purpose. In times like these, Sir John, magistracy should strain every sinew of that power, which the legislative wisdom has entrusted them with, against the vices of a few, for the benefit of the whole; merely discharging your duty, is but a negative or pagan virtue, inasmuch that conscience dictates, and the will is bound.—However superficially virtuous a magistrate of your active disposition might have appeared in the twelfth century, the eighteenth seems to have more necessity than relish for your discipline. In fine, Sir John, you are the great herald of criminal law, denouncing vengeance against its most daring enemies, whose awful fulminations give infant vice its leading strings, and the more overgrown villain his *string* too.—Could I subjoin patriot to the rest, thus much would be too little to speak your merits, as it is this alone, with our modern sons of liberty, amounts to panegyric.—Therefore to the point.—You have at last, Sir John, laid your feeling finger upon Bolland—he is hanged—but in him we have only

lost a journeyman to sin—a subordinate villain, inoffensive in his nature to those behind. That fire of infamy, Pr—le, is not hanged yet—he remains a lasting monument of disgrace to the laws of this nation. The crimes committed, single-handed, by this Leviathan of vice, this monster in iniquity, out-spins the Tyburn Chronicle, though its catalogue of murders were trebled; every street in this metropolis echoes his villainies; every prison groans with misery of his creating.—A miscreant so voracious after vice, that he seems hell's chief factor—his whole faculties are employed in the promulgation of terror, horror, bloodshed, and carnage—his whole strength and powers are exerted to force the trenches, which heaven has raised against human wickedness.—I have, in open defiance of a legend of desperadoes, lugged the culprit out to public view, and saved thousands from falling a prey to his hellish appetite. I have charged him with crimes, and proved them too, sufficient to hang five hundred inferior knaves.—The offence for which he is now under bail to take his trial at the Old Bailey, is one of his lightest enormities, and it would be bantering the gallows to hang him for so *trifling* a misdemeanor; yet, Sir John,

notwithstanding frauds, perjuries, burglaries, and robberies of every denomination, abound so plentifully to aid his conviction, our laws are insufficient to put a period to his transgressions—his art and knavery alone, will baffle all their force and energy—fortified and barricaded with a banditti of perjury-mongers, affidavit-manufacturers, and a curious fund of dear bought quibbles, he is invulnerable to justice.—His successful plunders have furnished him with the law's best weapon (money) with this necessary ingredient, he will contaminate the very fountain of justice, and make corruption flow like a spring tide, to wash away the fair stream of truth.—The produce of his booties will procure a large portion of the best chewed eloquence at the bar, together with a quire of affidavits manufactured and sworn by his *pious* self and co. with which he will prove rapine, courteous civility; glaring murder, accidental rencountre; midnight burglary, peaceable entry; palpable theft, error in judgment, and rank perjury a misnomer in grammar. From the improbability that a rascal so superlatively wicked, a reptile of such preposterous magnitude, should survive the commission of such pernicious acts, I am apprehensive these assertions

fertions will lose that degree of credit they
 justly merit from all honest men ; but you,
 Sir John, can bear me witness, I set down
 nought in falsehood or malice — The
 world, in general, conceive no very favour-
 able opinion of the morals or humanity of
 a thief-taker, and from this notion the ro-
 tation-office in Bow-street is held some little
 distance from a tabernacle of righteousness ;
 but such a conjecture is, in a comparative
 sense, not only a gross prejudice against
 the profession, but an unjust reflection on
 the principles of your little community of
 ministers. For a proof, Sir John, let us
 take a survey of Pr—le's receptacle of
*lamb*s in Chancery-lane : oh, horror ! the
 seminary in Bow-street, when thieves,
 thief-takers, and all are in full convocation,
 is a temple of piety and chastity, opposed to
 that repository of fiends ; there perjury
 flows in copious streams from its original
 fountain ; there sable vice sits engendered
 in an Ethiopian * countenance, secure
 from the betraying blush of shame. —
 There pyramids of registered falsehood are
 always ready to convert legal right into
 oppressive wrong. — There miscreants bar-

* He has recruited his band of affidavit-men with
 negroes.

ter their reptile souls for leave to dine, whose natural existence is prescribed to this diabolical regimen, beef, porter, and perjury—perjury, porter, and beef—wretched beings, that have no alternative, but compelled to truck their salvation to fill a bladder and a fathom of gut! There the destruction of the defenceless widow and helpless orphan is hatched, nourished, and matured into execution, with all the rapidity of remorseless infamy, by a brood of dæmons whom hell, over-gorged with sin, hath vomited forth from a nauseated stomach. There, Sir John, you may view legions of embodied hussars, with the whole militia knights of the pad and the post accoutred, and armed cap-a-pée, with true Swiss principles and courage, ready for all enterprizes, no matter whether to charge a man with debt, or discharge a pistol.—The old philosophical rule holds good on every occasion, *nothing is unjust that's profitable*—example and precepts are not wanting to encourage the most heroic undertaking.

Thus much, Sir John, for the rough cast and out-lines of the character I am about to present you with.—I shall now come so near the life, that one touch of the Promethean torch will make Moloch start

start from the canvaſs, and curſe me for his exiſtence.

Mr. Pr—le, it ſeems, like a dull mule, kicks at the laſh which was intended as a gentle correction, and appeals to the public from my rigid chaſtiſement, relying on their mercy for mitigation of my arbitrary ſentence, “he declares himſelf no longer able to bare the ſcourge,” and with an intrepidity of face, equalled by nothing but his principles, denies the whole charges alledged againſt his *ſpotleſs* and *immaculate* fame. I would not be thought cruel, at leaſt I will convince even this *harmleſs* appellant, that I am not unjuſt—he ſhall have juſtice at the bar of an injur’d community, and nothing but juſtice. I will, therefore, put my integrity and candour to its full ſtretch, and lay my allegations before that public, to whom he has ſo injudiciouſly appealed, with a degree of tenderneſs and probity which his heart is a ſtranger too. I have, in the courſe of my eſſays, ſeverely animadverted on Mr. Pr—le’s conduct; accuſed him of enormous robberies, frauds, perjuries, and forgeries—it now becomes both my duty and inclination to prove the horrid allegations; how far I ſhall acquit myſelf with that integrity, which characteriſes an honeſt man,
will

will manifestly appear in the course of these sheets.—Mr. Pr—le, appealing to the public in the Morning Chronicle of the first instant, positively avers his unacquaintance with Mr. Ballamy of Thame's-street, inasmuch, that he solemnly declares, "he never heard of such a man". Mr. Ballamy's story alone, is a chain of villainies so intricate and interwoven with fraudulent devices of every species, that to recapitulate one half, would swell this letter to an enormous size—suffice it, therefore, to say, that Mr. Ballamy, in the space of a few years, has been robbed by this hussar of law, and his troop of free-booters, of the *trifling* sum of 3000 l. by the following notable artifices, burglaries, and stratagems.

During Mr. Pr—le's residence in the King's Bench, upon an attachment of contempt, he met with one Collins, a prisoner, likewise for some inconsiderable debts, and who was heir at law to a considerable estate, charged with an annuity payable to the mother, and the younger children's fortunes. Mr. Pr—le advises Collins to become a bankrupt, and for that purpose, obtains near one hundred pounds of his friends, upon the full assurance that the *real estate would not be affect-*
ed

ed thereby. Mr. Pr—le therefore set about to procure a petitioning creditor, in the following curious manner: Bolland, and one Adderly, of infamous memory, &c. had, about that time, defrauded some person of seven fine horses, for which they stood indicted. One of these *worthies* made a sham sale of the horses in question, for about 160 l. and a note was accordingly given by Collins, though the horses were never delivered.——

Upon this *equitable* footing, the *bonest* horse-dealer became a creditor; and petitioned for a commission of bankruptcy, which, by Pr—le's managements, was readily obtained, prosecuted, and such assignees chosen as best suited his purpose. Soon after this transaction, Pr—le became acquainted with Thomas Hughes; then Clerk to Mr. Ballamy, whose inclination for villainy, to do him justice, was not equal with Pr—le.——Mr. Ballamy having confidence in his man Hughes, entrusted him with the laying out large sums of money; this was a sufficient cue for Pr—le.——Hughes's budding knavery soon ripened into full-blown villainy; and he consults Pr—le how a capital sum might be raised; on such occasion, Mr. Hughes discovered the strength of his penetration—no man in the
king-

kingdom could more readily assist him.—Pr—le now sets up Collins's real Estate for sale; and Ballamy, not doubting Hughes's veracity, the assignees of Collins (creatures of Pr—le's fictitious creditors and insolvents) make the assignment for a consideration of about 2,100l.—by this notable transaction, Mr. Pr—le obtained a capital booty.

And now the petitioning creditor, under this commission, gets into prison, and then assigns his debt of 160l. to other persons, who took upon them to make application, by bill or petition, to the court, in order to set Ballamy's assignment aside; the assignees are changed, and by a thousand intricacies and manœuvres of Pr—le's, the Estate is hung up in Chancery. However, I shall leave that particular open, and afford Mr. Pr—le time to recollect and give an account of the distribution, he, Hughes, and the *equitable* assignees made to the creditors, because that is a point not yet ascertained. I shall content myself, for the present, with remarking the mischievous consequence of this bankruptcy.—The real and *bona fide* creditors never received a shilling—the bankrupt himself is ruined and beggared—the mother broke her heart with grief—the younger children are turn-

ed a-drift on the world for want of their fortunes out of the estate, and, finally, Mr. Ballamy is upwards of two thousand pounds out of pocket. It may be answered, Sir John, that a reputable attorney, employed on the part of Ballamy, might set all these artifices at defiance—I readily grant the justness of the imaginary supposition; but what solicitor of reputation will be concerned in a cause, wherein he is sure of being sworn out of his Christian name?—a wretch, so loaded with infamy, every honest man in the profession as studiously avoids, as he would an epidemical contagion; and those of his own stamp, I mean those that come nearest him in villainy*, have often been employed to no other purpose, than compleating the unfortunate complainants ruin. In fine, Sir John, there are many more bankruptcies of the same complexion, in which Mr. Ballamy has been a sufferer; but the circumstances attending the negotiation of the different transactions, are chequered with such ingenious perplexities, that it would take a folio volume, to unravel the most

* Mr. Ballamy has already had his pocket picked by a set of second rate Pr—les; all of which, whether of THIEVES's Inn, or LYON's Inn, had no more honesty than HATT.

accessible out-lines.—Let it for the present suffice to say, that neither Mr. Ballamy, nor the poor family in question, appear to me to be out of the reach of redress; and, if Mr. Ballamy, with the other injur'd parties, will so far rely on my judgment and integrity, as to permit me to recommend a solicitor, I will be answerable there is a moral certainty of obtaining justice.—The laws in being are amply sufficient; an attorney of integrity and spirit only is wanting.—By way of illustration to the above supposition, that few attorneys of reputation will undertake to procure redress, where the injury is committed by Pr—le, I shall relate one instance, amongst many:—“Some time since Mr. Priddle brought an execution in Mr. Ballamy's house in London, but for what legal demand he knows not to this day. However, Mr. Ballamy sent for Mr. ———, an attorney of known probity, who, in the first instance, advised him to pay the money, and get rid of the villain at any rate.—Mr. Ballamy, therefore, implicitly followed his attorney's advice and tamely suffered himself to be robbed of near one hundred Pounds. Had the Villain stopped here, Sir John, I should hold the transaction too barren of vice for a place

a place in this letter; these *little slips* are *callow unfledged villainies*, practised every day by inferior Pr—les. In about a week or ten days after, Mr. Ballamy was with his wife at his house at Clapton, where he was again taken on a *Ca Sa*, notwithstanding he had discharged the writ of *Fi Fa*, but a few days before, for the same pretended debt.—These are actions, Sir John, that discover abilities sufficient to recommend a solicitor to the notice of every *honest* man in the kingdom.—But to return—we have now seen Ballamy robbed a second time; and such robbery attended with all the aggravating circumstances of murder, in event. The brutal manner in which the executive part of this second plunder was conducted, surpasses every thing I have met with, even from Pr—le. The banditti, assailed Mr. Ballamy, in his chamber before himself or wife was up; nor could decency, humanity, or intreaties, prevail on these infernal hell-hounds to quit the room, whilst Mrs Ballamy dressed herself. In short, this affair happened on a Thursday morning, and the Monday following Mrs. Ballamy absolutely expired, declaring, in her last moments, she received her death from the terror this dreadful gang of assassins had thrown

thrown her into. This was the wife of Samuel Ballamy, Sir John, that Pr—le has most audaciously denied any knowledge of, in the Morning Chronicle of the first instant; however, to refresh Mr. Pr—le's memory, and to put the matter beyond a dispute, I here present you with a most cogent certificate, the authenticity of which is as unimpeachable as holy writ.

KNOW all men by these presents that *William P——le of Red Lion Court Fleet-street London Gentleman in pursuance of the award made by Edward Benton Esquire master on the plea side in his majesty's court of King's Bench between Samuel Ballamy of Thame's-street London Ironmonger and me the said William P——e, bearing date the fourth day of this present November, have demised released and forever quit claim and by these presents do remise release and forever quit claim unto the said Samuel Ballamy his heirs executors and administrators all and all manner of action and actions cause and causes of action suits bills bonds writings obligatory debts dues duties attempts sum and sums of money judgments executions extents quarrels con-*
tro-

troverfies trespaffes damages and demands
whatsoever both in law and equity or other-
wise howsoever which against the said Sa-
muel Ballamy I ever had and which I my
heirs executors or administrators shall or
may hereafter have claim challenge or de-
mand for or by reason or means of any
matter cause or thing whatsoever from the
beginning of the world unto the *fourteenth*
day of February now last past except as relates
to the costs of the suit in the said award men-
tioned In witness whereof I have here-
unto set my hand and seal the *twentieth*
day of November in the *tenth* year of the
reign of our sovereign *George the third* by
the grace of God of Great Britain
France and Ireland *king* defender of the
faith and in the year of our Lord one thou-
sand seven hundred and *sixty-nine*.

Sealed and delivered being
first duly stampd in the
presence of and the se-
veral interlineations be-
ing first made

W. P—LE. ♦

GEORGE LONG, Junr.

R E-

RECEIVED the day and year last within written of and from the within named Samuel Ballamy the two several sums of one hundred and ninety-six pounds and five shillings and twenty-seven pounds which were awarded and ordered to be paid by him to me by the award of the within named Edward Benton Esquire within also mentioned and which I receive in pursuance of the said award

196 5
27 0

W. PR—LE.

223 5

Witness GEORGE LONG, Jun^r.
THO^s CARRARD.

How those costs accumulated, and for what purpose they were demanded and paid, no man living (Pr—le and his band of knights of the post excepted) can account for.—The following piece of villainy I shall give you, Sir John, nearly in Mr. Ballamy's own words:—a little before Midsummer last, Mr. Ballamy had a house to lett, ready furnished, at Clapton, which these industrious Gentlemen got scent of, and immediately dispatched one of

of their emissaries to treat for the same.—
 The youth was of goodly appearance,
 newly inlisted into the troop, and wore
 the countenance of honesty.—Mr. Bal-
 lamy, therefore, *agreed* to lett the house ;
 and sent a woman down to clean and pre-
 pare it.—But the old traders in iniquity,
 remembering the proverb, that *delays are*
dangerous, determined not to put off till
 to-morrow, that which might be accom-
 plished to-day ; therefore judged it unne-
 cessary to wait the *tedious* form of legal
 possession ; and upon this principle they
 posted to Clapton, and applied to the ser-
 vant for the key, she, not dreaming that
 such application was made without her
 master's knowledge, privity, or consent,
 scrupled not to deliver it. The great
 point was by this stroke of policy gained,
 and the plunder followed with rapidity.
 A convocation was immediately held, at
 which were present the following illustri-
 ous personages ; *imprimis*, the learned and
 notorious William Pr—le, attorney at
 law, the almost as infamous Mr. George
 W—, then of Bartlett's Buildings, Hol-
 born, now of Wood-street Compter, with
 his fry of imps, Mr. V—, clerk to
 Pr—le, and Mr. C—, the supposed
 tenant.—The plan being now settled, the
 D robbery

robbery began with infinite composure, on terms, and in manner following : Mr. C——, the supposed tenant, made a regular sale of the goods, and his pious attorney took care that *he* was not *cheated*. Mr. W——, upon this occasion, turned appraiser, and, from a principle of equity, valued them at 40 l. though worth 150 l. another gentleman in the family became purchaser, and Mr. W——, the broker, was left in possession of both goods and premises, who could not be honest even to his friend.—Therefore Mr. Ballamy has the consolation to see a fellow-sufferer in the transactions, for W——, wading thro' the whole piece of knavery, received his fee as auctioneer, and afterwards cheated his friend and employer out of the whole. But this is not all, the sequel of the story is more curiously alarming; a little after this scene of villainy had been transacting, Mr. Ballamy went down to Clapton, and regained possession of what he *thought* his own house; but, alas! every man is liable to errors, where *Pr*—le is concerned; his art surpasses the magic of Sancho's white wand.—Mr. Ballamy was instantly convinced that he had mistook the matter; for Mr. W——, &c. preferred a bill of indictment at Hicks's-hall, the

the ensuing sessions, and convicted Mr. Ballamy of a forceable entry into his own house; and by swearing *in the lump*, cast him in 20*l.* damages for such *breach of the peace*, and *atrocious attack on another man's property*.—Perhaps Mr. Pr—le will take upon him to deny his having any hand in this business; therefore, Sir John, it will not be amiss to recount a trifling conversation that past between Mr. Ballamy and Pr—le, on the former finding the latter regaling himself with a dish of tea, in the newly acquired garden.—Mr. Ballamy. “Ah! friend Pr—le, what! are you not hanged yet?” Pr—le.—“No, Mr. Ballamy, I intend having a little more of your money first.” How prophetic Mr. Pr—le will prove, time only can show. Yet, without the assistance of much divinity, I will pronounce Mr. Pr—le's harvest over in that quarter. Mr. Ballamy has taken a night-spell, a most effectual method to rid himself of this *ignis fatuus*, that has so often led him into the bogs of law.—He has, Sir John, purchased a commodity with an attorney Mr. Pr—le never dealt in, a little common honesty.

The next charge I shall exhibit against this *ornament* to society, Sir John, is a robbery he committed in your own

neighbourhood, the particulars of which you are acquainted with, and I have reason to believe, is still active in your memory. It seems that Mr. Mendez, who kept a toy-shop in Bow-street, Covent-garden, died possessed of near 10,000 l. of which property he had in his life-time made a deed of gift of all the residue, after his debts should be discharged, in favour of Mrs. Thackston, who had lived with him as his house-keeper for many years, and in whom he put such confidence, as to entrust his whole property to her care. —On the death of this gentleman, she took possession of the effects in behalf of herself, and the deceased's creditors. The following affidavit will serve to lead more explicitly to the matter,

William Penrice, late of Lambeth, in the county of Surry, now of the King's Bench Prison, gentleman, and Effa Thomas, of Whitehall, severally say, and declare, that about fourteen or sixteen days after the death of Mr. Manasses Mendez, on a Saturday Francis Evatt came to the house of the said William Penrice; and in the presence of both Mr. Penrice and Mrs. Thomas, told Mr. Penrice that a gentle-

man had died and left property, and no friend or relation, nor had he made any will, and desired Mr. Penrice to tell him what could be done.——Mr. Penrice advised him to go to some eminent practitioner in the law, and recommended Mr. Martin;——but Evatt said he would be ingenuous with Mr. Penrice; he knew Mr. Penrice was acquainted with Mr. Priddle, and he must have such an attorney, FOR THAT A WILL MUST BE FRAMED, AND HE KNEW MR. PRIDDLE COULD HELP HIM TO PROPER PERSONS TO SWEAR TO IT. And the like discourse was again repeated the next morning by Mr. Evatt, at Mr. Penrice's house, in the presence of both Mr. Penrice and Mrs. Thomas.

Mr. Penrice says, that Mr. Evatt desiring him to go to Mr. Priddle's, he, on said next morning (being Sunday) did go to Mr. Priddle's house, with said Evatt and Ann Beeforth (who calls herself Ann Beaford.)——Priddle not being at home, they went to Mr. Goodwin, the proctor—and Evatt told him, that an expression had been used by Mr. Mendez, relative to his intention of making a will, in favour of Mrs. Beeforth, and that two persons had heard it—but it had never been reduced to writing. The Proctor said, there should have been

been three persons.—Mrs. Beeforth then winked at Mr. Evatt—and Evatt said, he believed there was a third person in another room, who might hear it.—And they gave the proctor half-a-guinea to enter a caveat the next morning, which the proctor promised to do. They then returned to Priddle's house, but could not find him.—And then went to Mrs. Beeforth's, where she requested a woman (who Mr. Penrice believes to be Ann Duckett) to swear to such declaration of Mr. Mendez, in her favour, and Mr. Evatt did the like—but the woman refused, and declared, she neither could nor would swear to any such thing, for she never heard any thing like it.—The next morning Beeforth, Penrice, and Evatt went to Priddle's house, and found him.—And there Evatt very openly told Priddle the whole story; and that they must desire his assistance to procure one Person, at least, to swear to the intended noncupative will, which he said he would do; AND EXPRESSED AN INTENTION TO PROCURE A DUTCH WOMAN, WELL KNOWN TO PENRICE.—And then at Evatt's request, Priddle drew the form of a noncupative will to be set up—but said he would not part with it in his own hand-writing.—

Penrice

Penrice therefore copied it—but not caring that his hand-writing should appear, Evatt copied it from his copy, and then Priddle's and Penrice's draft and copy were torn.—Then Beeforth, Priddle, and Penrice went to Beeforth's house, and after some private persuasion by Beeforth, said, Ann Ducket and (as he thinks) one Mrs. Aldridge were persuaded to sign their names to it, but declared that they never would be persuaded to swear to it.

Both Mr. Penrice and Mrs. Thomas declare, that Mr. Priddle, Mrs. Beeforth, and others, had (in their presence and hearing) several discourses relative to this matter afterwards (when the difficulty of getting the said will substantiated being started) Priddle advised, and it was agreed among them, THAT PRIDDLE SHOULD GET SOME JEWS TO ENTER CAVEATS, to harraß and delay every creditor and relation, who should apply for administration to the deceased—and get possession of the property he left, or as much as they could, by every measure in their power, however violent or oppressive, and turn it all into money; and when legally called upon, THAT BEEFORTH, IN WHOSE NAME EVERY THING WAS TO BE DONE, SHOULD ABSCOND INTO THE COUNTRY.—And as
to

to Mr. Theakston, who was in possession of some part of the deceased's effects under a deed of gift to his wife, they determined to take them all away by force, and every other property he had, and load him, and all concerned for him, or with him, with actions; and by long imprisonment, terror, and poverty, force him to release his interest and just demands for about 500 l. and pocket all the rest.—And Priddle gave Penrice ten pounds, as an earnest of a farther acknowledgment, for the trouble he had been at in this business.

W^m. PENRICE.

By the above affidavit of Penrice, Sir John, you'll understand the business was as well planned as executed. Without waiting the *tedious* form of *Commons cant*, Mr. Pr—le mustered his LIFE Guards at the head of which he entered Mrs. Thaxton's house, and plundered it of jewels, watches, lace, clothes, and other valuables, to the amount of many thousand pounds.—During this scene of burglary, Sir John, you sent Mrs. Thaxton assistance; and, by a laudable interposition, protracted the perpetration of the robbery for some hours. But this troop of
pioneers,

pioneers, Sir John, are too well versed in the method of breaking down fences, and leveling obstacles of such trifling consequence, to suffer the business to be impeded, — therefore writs were taken out against the following persons, at the suit of Mrs. Bedford, Pr — le's fair client, viz.

Mr. Mitchell, an attorney;	2,000
Mr. Savage, ditto;	2,000
Mr. Halburton, a constable;	2,000
Mr. Williams, servant to the late	
Mr. Mendez,	3,000
Allen, footman to Mrs. Thaxton,	2,000
Mrs. Thaxton,	2,000
Mr. Payne, a watchman, arrested	
off his stand,	2,000
Mr. Manning, a constable;	2,000

Mr. Bond, one of your clerks, 2,000

£. 19,000

The above persons, it seems, were bu-
 ried in protecting Mrs. Thaxton's property,
 till you sent for a party of guards from the
 Savoy, and for such intrusion they *deserv-*
ed a gaol. Mr. Pr—le has a plundering
 licence; and you are convinced, that ma-
 gistracy

gistracy has no Jurisdiction over his *barmaless* midnight revels. He sent his chief herald, Bolland, to acquaint you, if you was impertinently inquisitive, he had an odd writ, for a brace of thousands, to quiet your Worship.

I shall not follow Mr. Pr—le through all the infernal inquisitions wherein his *factor in flesh*, Mr. Bolland, deposited the above lawful debtors; it will be sufficient to remark, that yourself, if I mistake not, became bail for Mr. Bond, your clerk, and the unfortunate Mrs. Thaxton is, at this instant, in the King's-Bench Prison.

Perhaps, Sir John, this adept at quibbles will answer, *not for that debt*; I will therefore anticipate the quirk, and declare *she is not*, because the action *has been legally superseded*. However, little consolation arose from that event—for previous to such *supersedeas*, Mrs. Beeford had again saluted the Holy Evangelist, and we find a detainer for 600 l. lodged against her for money lent, at the suit of Beeford. How Mrs. Thaxton became indebted to Mrs. Beeford, in such an enormous sum, can only be accounted for by the ingenuity of a Pr—le, when we consider the only connection between these two ladies was simply this—the former occasionally had,

had the honour of giving the latter a clean plate, and washing it after it was dirty.— However, both Priddle and Beeford stand indicted upon this *equitable* business; the former for his old offence, subornation of perjury, and the latter for perjury itself. It is not unlikely that Mr. Priddle will deny the approach of justice, and affirm my libellous intention; I shall therefore, Sir John, give it from under his own hand, in the following notice:

The King against William Priddle, on an indictment for subornation of perjury.
London. }

TAKE notice, that I will personally appear at the next General Sessions of Oyer and Terminer, to be held at Justice Hall in the Old Bailey, in the city of London, on Wednesday the twenty-ninth day of April instant, and then and there will try my traverse on the said indictment. Dated the 22d day of April, 1772.

(Signed.) WILLIAM PRIDDLE,
the said defendant.

To James Thaxton, and Mary,
his wife, the prosecutor and
prosecutrix of the indictment.

Here Mr. Priddle would have slipped through the hands of justice for the fiftieth time, had he not those to deal with, who are able to encounter him at his own weapons. I need not inform you, Sir John, that it would be rather difficult to convict a man of subornation before the perjury is proved.—Mr. Priddle, by taking care that Beeford should not appear, was not in much danger himself, therefore the trial is put off, as the Prosecutor proceeds by the old adage, *slow and sure*.

To recount the numerous appendages attending this knavish transaction, would be a work of infinite time and labour; I shall therefore dismiss the subject, with adding a little immaterial circumstance, by way of garnish to the whole. Independent of the effects in Bow-street, Mrs. Thaxton had a house in Duke-street, Grosvenor-square, in which was a *little* property of 3000 l. value. Mr. Priddle, who generally takes upon himself to judge for others in these cases, thought such *baubles* quite unnecessary for a woman, whom he had determined should spend the next two years in a prison, therefore Beeford is put hearty to the calves-skin *, and

* An infamous cant word with Priddle for kissing the
Tella-

and avow those goods likewise to be her's; — But how to get at them was the question; why, Beeford again must be the instrument, who immediately gives a warrant of attorney to confess judgment, by virtue of which, a fresh plunder ensued; but unluckily for the then sheriffs, they are answerable for the effects to Mrs. Thaxton, the only comfort she has left, except that of sending the offenders to America.

Mr. Priddle, with an audacity peculiar to himself, takes occasion to enlarge on his numerous habitations, viz. Chancery-lane and Rockerdine, in Shropshire, &c. As he has a singular mode of obtaining every thing he possesses, I shall give you, Sir John, a brief account of his method of gaining possession of houses. His town residence was originally a lodging taken of Mrs. Vaughan by Mr. W———; (Priddle's character being so notorious, that he cannot even get a garret in his own name) — by this device he got INTO the house. It next follows to shew how he got the legal owner OUT.—Why, he proceeded regularly from the garret to the cellar, and took room by room, as the Turks did

Testament, which is generally bound in calf; and the only part he is acquainted with.

Rhodes,

Rhodes inch by inch ; and in the end, to accomplish a compleat possession, and rid himself of so troublesome a guest as the right owner, made one of his fiends swear the peace against Mrs. Vaughan, and sent her to the King's-Bench, where she remained for some time. I cannot help observing, Sir John, that Mrs. Vaughan is a weakly delicate woman, and the ruffian Collins, whose life was in such imminent danger from her *valour*, is as magnified in size as sin. For the benefit of landlords in general, it will not be an unseasonable hint to confess my *doubts*, not only about the legality of his obtaining possession of houses, but the honesty with which he pays the rent.—In short, Sir John, I shall not scruple to announce his having lived rent-free for ten years past. But as I am treating of his mansions, it would be injustice to pop by his country seat in silence. Wellington Spa owns at present this amiable attorney as its lawful master ; —the premises consist of an house, farm, &c. of the yearly rent of 50 l. One Mrs. Willet is, in equity, the proprietor, who being involved in some difficulties which had arisen, in consequence of a complicated contract she had entered into with

J. H—

J. H— and D. G. Mr. Priddle; who is ever watchful over the villainies of this pious age, and ready to defend and protect the helpless widow, files an enormous long bill in Chancery, also another in the Exchequer, at the suit of Dr. G—, to recover possession, a quibble to a pretended right he had in equity, and obtains an attachment of contempt against poor Mrs. Willet. For want of abilities to answer, together with some other pretty manœuvres, she was thereupon taken into custody; and Priddle making a merit of discharging her, prevailed on the deluded woman to give him legal possession.—And though he made use of the parties name in the suit, he had no authority for so doing; and if he had, how came he to keep possession these three years past, without even paying the rent. Mrs. Willet had occasion to sue one Smith, a farmer, tenant of hers; Priddle, while she thought him honest, was her attorney, who, with amazing alacrity, pursued the debtor, and recovers fifty pounds damages, which remains unpaid his client to this day.—

Having thus given a brief account of his different habitations, it will not be amiss to describe the furniture with which these mansions are decorated: some time since

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he had so far ingratiated himself into the opinion of a tradesman in the Strand, as to persuade the credulous dupe he was capable of friendship, notwithstanding Infinite Wisdom has set a mark in his countenance, to warn the innocent part of the creation against the wiles of his tongue. This poor unthinking man was involved in some difficulties, which nothing could extricate him from, in Priddle's opinion; but a commission of bankruptcy. The man, therefore, injudiciously followed Priddle's advice implicitly, and signed a warrant to confess judgment on his effects, part of which, at this instant, compose the furniture of his palace at the Spa; what became of the residue, heaven knows; all I can learn of the matter amounts to this, the wretched object of his villainy was robbed of the whole—no commission taken out, or money returned. His drawing-room, or rather repository of stolen goods, is decorated with part of the plunder he got from Mrs. Thaxton; and with the considerable addition of that he took from my Chambers in Gray's-inn, this Hecatomb is compleatly fitted up with every thing either useful or ornamental. Mr. Priddle is possessed, not only of all the thieving qualities of his inferior, but
all

all the fashionable dissipations of his betters, added to his town and country residence, he has his stud of horses and brood mares. How he came possessed of so valuable an acquisition, you may, Sir John, form some idea from the following CUE: fifteen months ago I applied to you about the grey mare he stole from ME, and nearly the same time Mr. Maddox of Withington, in Shropshire, applied to me about a bay horse he had stolen from HIM.

Mr. Priddle's method of substantiating a doubtful demand, both for himself and client, is not the least curious part of his practice. Amongst many instances it will answer the present purpose to particularize one, and for doing this, I have authority from David Roach, Esq; who unfortunately met with Mr. Priddle in the King's Bench; a prison, like the grave, levels all distinction, and there Priddle, as *attorney general*, laid hold of Mr. Roach, who employed him in some matters relative to the recovery of an estate. It is sufficient for Mr. Priddle once to become authorized to act as an attorney for a man of property; he never quits him afterwards whilst his effects, real or personal, will produce a guinea, as will appear, Sir John, in the sequel of this story. Mr. Roach

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made

made an assignment of some real estate to certain trustees, of which Mr. Ballamy was one, and the creditors of Mr. Roach received bonds from Ballamy, &c. for payment of Roach's debts, which bonds were left in the hands of Priddle. However, I will not minutely enquire what became of ALL these bonds, but leave you, Sir John, to DIVINE, from the sample of equity we meet with in the disposition of the following one, viz. Mr. Kenny's who at the time it was given had been paid and was abroad—a circumstance that slipped Capt. Roach's memory. Mr. Priddle steering by a *peculiar* line of *integrity* in this, as in every other action of his life, could not foresee a tincture of injustice in suing Ballamy for the bond in the name of Kenny, and with affidavits sufficient to paper the Mansion-house, recovered the contents and all the costs thereon.—I shall not enumerate a fiftieth part of the villainies he has exercised on Mr. Roach, who has hitherto put up with the injuries, rather than subject himself to the censure of his friends, on account of so disreputable a connection.—Somewhat above a year since, Mrs. Pritchard, who on some occasions passes for Priddle's WIFE, and on others for his FRIEND and *gentle* mistress—
for

for instance, when he has cheated the world of all he can, and spun out the full length of his tether, he becomes bankrupt, and Mrs. Priddle, the WIFE, sinks into Mrs. Pritchard, the friendly creditor, and a CAPITAL one too, for it is necessary she should be assignee to his *valuable* effects; and in this twofold capacity she now stands, as will appear at the Secretary of Bankrupts Office.—By virtue of her assigneeship, she sues out writs against whom Priddle shall think most adviseable—the charges are in general laid for business done, he having obtained his certificate (which indeed the Commissioners for a long time refused to certify, on account of the *equitable* face his bankruptcy wore) is admitted evidence in behalf of his *creditors*, with a cloud of others equally notorious, by which device he seldom fails obtaining a verdict.—But to return, Sir John, a demand is brought against Mr. Roach by this assignee in petticoats, this thing of rags—this bundle of clouts and perjury.—Indeed the matter seemed somewhat difficult at first.—Mr. Roach had employed an attorney of integrity and reputation to defend him against attacks of this nature, but to a man of Mr. Priddle's ingenuity, every thing is familiar and

easy—if truth should *impertinently* peep in his face, she instantly faints at the stench of perjury.—Few obstacles with him outlive the hour of their birth, and few attornies can keep pace with him through the serpentine labyrinth of fiction.—Therefore having sworn a QUANTUM SUFFICIT, and obtained judgment by a train of infamy, he was now apprehensive Capt. Roach would move the Court, to set aside the judgment for illegal and irregular proceedings, &c. and to guard against that mode of redress, Mr. Priddle prevailed on one O. J. M——y* to write a letter as

* This gentleman seems ambitious of possessing the qualities of fuller's-earth.—He is uncommonly assiduous in taking out the stains from the blotted reputation of every scoundrel in the kingdom.—It was his virgin pen that attempted to emblaunch the fame of his late *pious* patron, Bolland—moved by the similitude of character, and instigated by the intenseness of hunger, he has undertaken to white-wash his present master and PROTECTOR, Priddle.—The task indeed is arduous—and I fear Priddle must procure a better scrubbing-brush than this hacknied minion, or be content to wear his Ethiopian countenance during the Dog-days—at best he will remain a pyc-ball.—But the virtues and perfections of this *amiable* secretary must for the present lie dormant, till we see what degree of credit his elaborate production will gain from a discerning public.—It shall then become my province to applaud his merit, or quench his thirst, for immortal fame.—In doing which, perhaps, I shall so *embellish* the work, that its author will be out of love with *ornaments* in VERSE or PROSE for evermore.

from

from the said Mr. Roach, *purporting to be a letter of acknowledgment that such demand was just.*—But now the talk became too hard for Mr. M——y, he did not chuse to subscribe the name of David Roach.—Priddle not dismayed at so trifling an event, replies, in Richard's stile, “Henceforward will I deal with knaves of less circumspection; none are for me who pry into my actions with thinking eyes.”—He most religiously kept his word, for the name of David Roach was both subscribed and sworn to in less than an hour after by Priddle, or some of his *writing* friends.—It will be forestalling your own judgment, Sir John, to acquaint you, this stroke of generalship consolidated the demand; I only mean to inform you, Priddle received the cash.

If this kind of ingenuity is on any occasion *praise-worthy*, it is certainly meritorious in the following instance:—Mr. Priddle had about twelve months ago set his heart upon a *bauble* of 30*l.* value, he therefore took a resolution to purchase it, and agreeable to his usual way of *purchasing* every thing he possesses, except his conscience, made a short and rapid bargain. He obtained the commodity under pretence of examining its qualities, and made pay-
ment

ment for it by a long affidavit, *that he had no knowledge of the owner*; and by way of a FULL receipt, provides another affidavit, which proved, as clear as truth could testify, the *liberal* owner had made the trifle, in question, a present.

There are a sneaking kind of traders, called Taylors, that Priddle has an utter abhorrence too—therefore he is constrained to seek other methods of adorning his *beautiful* person—he is not destitute of *taste*, even in dress, and we see him the first day of term, taudry as a Jew doctor, or a strolling player,

His gaudy case contains a nasty soul,
Like filthy excrement in gilt close-stool.

He seems to have no passion for external blackness—the fable is all within.—For brevity sake, Sir John, I can afford you but one view of his wardrobe at present. It contains variety of rich laced, embroidered, and plain suits, with immense quantities of fine laces, silk hose, Holland shirts, &c. &c. &c. of which an unfortunate young gentleman lately RETURNED from India, and a more unfortunate lady lately GONE to prison, was, by injudiciously putting confidence in him, robbed.

There is something so baneful in the nature of Mr. Priddle, that even his friendship is
more

more pernicious than his enmity; and ~~those~~ who confide in the former, receive more stabs than those who have cause to dread the latter.—Hence it is that he is never trusted a second time, even by those most affianced from the double ties of interest and knavery.—No man in the kingdom can boast an equal loss, without the chance of an adequate profit.—He has forfeited the good word of every honest man, without gaining the esteem of every scoundrel---whilst he possesses every ill quality that disgrace human nature, without the extenuating allay of a good one.

Mr. Priddle finding himself thus pursued, and that no corner of the kingdom is open for the future exercise of his *talents*, has posted to town to finish his ledgerdmain of villainy, and with a methodistical sanctity, the crafty knave prates of honesty;—so strumpets who have spent a life of lewdness, turn bawds by way of *repentance*. Grown old in sin, and glutted with plain enormities, this epicure in vice has provided himself with a fresh book of cookery; and we find him, Sir John, inviting customers, by a bill of fare to the following purport, viz.:

“ That

"That the kingdom abounds with villains of every denomination; that justice is slow in pursuit of vice; that many fraudulent commissions of bankruptcies are daily issued to cheat fair honest men; that perjury flourishes to the disgrace of the nation—and that Mr. Robert Holloway is the most infamous of all villains; that he has defrauded the world of 30,000 l. in the space of twelve years; that he deserves the most exemplary punishment."

To this curious bill is also added a most infamous and wicked insinuation, highly reflecting upon the character of a gentleman of real and unimpeached reputation in the profession, &c.

The above incendiary scrawl is now dispersing through the town, aiming those unheard of devastations at others which originated in himself.—I have in the course of this letter given SOME PROOF of his talents in the bankrupt way, and promise the public a much larger portion speedily. The evils this *gentleman of the law* complains of are not imaginary ones, nor do I doubt his having the plan to destroy them—FOR IT WAS READY PLANNED, AND WROTE TO HIS HAND, AMONGST THE PAPERS HE TOOK FROM MY CHAMBERS.—But why had not this *gentleman*

element of the law, Mr. Solicitor Prid-
dle, grown honest by an earlier day.—
He is going apprentice to virtue, with
the hoary emblems of vice seated on his
brow.—If this *gentleman* of the law
intends a REFORMATION in good ear-
nest, he might indeed make short work
on't, and remove the nuisance effectually;
—it will be only cleansing his own sink
of infamy, from whence all those com-
plaints positively or virtually spring.—IN
HIM we view the great reservoir of per-
dition, reeking hot contagion on all who
approach.—Shall the villainous CAUSE then
be esteemed a proper REMEDY? Will men
of your acquaintance with the world, and
knowledge of human nature, give credit
to so bare-faced an impostor, who has so
repeatedly and recently stabbed every mor-
tal part of society? No, Sir John, I have
unpeeled this amiable member of the law
—I have instructed this sweet nut, ready
for justice, to crack.—But this stratagem
is his dernier resort; he sets at bay, like
a hunted stag, gasping for the last breath,
which all his efforts will protract but to
a short date.

How dare the impious wretch attempt
forgery of this glaring complexion? Have
I not detected him in every species of per-

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jury,

jury, fraud, forgery, and robbery that is to be found in the catalogue of transgression?

Let this *gentleman* of the law stand forth and declare himself to the public—the business wears a pleasing and beneficial face. No *gentleman* of the law need, like an Italian bravo, sculk behind the sable curtain of assassination;—and for his encouragement, Sir John, I hereby declare, that all printers and publishers, of what denomination soever, have, and always shall have, full and free authority to publish my name and place of abode at full length—and that I will not commence or prosecute any suit or suits of law on account of any libel, provided that such printers and publishers will be answerable for the truth thereof, when they shall so print and publish.

After this fair and candid declaration, I shall rest assured, that whatever may appear against me, without a name and place of abode fairly subscribed, will, by a liberal minded community, be deemed an infamous, base, and cowardly attempt to lessen my credit with the public, and a cloke to screen the miscreants in question, from the just reward due to their unparalleled crimes.

The

The gentleman whom this reptile would stigmatize as my colleague, is happy in an unsullied reputation—he is known and esteemed by the honourable part of the profession—his fame is shielded from the stabs of a dark assassin, by that case-hardened coat of mail, integrity—and all the impotent attempts of a Priddle, to lessen that integrity, he holds the greatest ornament to his character. In so shocking a light does Mr. C—— view Priddle, that nothing could have induced him to become his prosecutor, had not the robbery committed on Mrs. Hudson, inspired him with an honest indignation. It was to snatch a helpless woman from the paws of so unmerciful a savage—to alleviate the affliction of one, whom his bare oppression had overwhelmed with misery, that instigated Mr. C—— to level his name with a Priddle; and I hope he will so far prevail, as to restore a friendless woman that comfort Mr. Priddle's villainy has long with-drawn from her.—But such is the tax, Sir John, every reputable attorney is subject to, who has spirit enough to encounter this hyæna of the law.—As to myself, Sir John, I could wish every action of my life was fairly canvassed.—Whatever complection my conduct

wears, I am so exceedingly partial to its colour, that so far from desiring it veiled, I shall seek every opportunity of urging a public review; and it will give me infinite satisfaction to see the task begun.—Whenever that event shall happen, I will most chearfully undertake my own justification, with candour and veracity.

I believe, Sir John, of all the robberies this Tirpin of the age ever committed, that committed on me was the most gentleman-like.—He really took pains in the work, and did not turn it out of his hands in a slovenly manner. This, Sir John, was none of your bungling half-finished jobs—and no man, but myself, would have been *unreasonable* enough to complain of a business so masterly executed.—Therefore I shall give it as a sample for every petty-fogger in England to copy after. The profession is not remarkably stocked with dunces; and for the *benefit* of mankind, in general, we may hope to see a few of those transactions every term.

Mr. Priddle had proved so successful in Bow-street, that he begun to think all those little quirks, tricks, and artifices in law, if not less profitable, were more tedious and uncertain than down right house-

house-breaking. This resolution fixed, it only remained to look for the most promising booty.—Report had furnished him with the contents of my chambers—for the scoundrel never was admitted to see them.—The account pleased him, and further ceremony was useless. On or about the 18th day of June, being the last day of the term preceding the long vacation, Mr. Priddle, Mr. Bolland, and divers men in their suit, entered the chambers, and after breaking open every door, every cabinet, drawer, or other place where there were a probability of finding any thing, they left about twenty men in possession, who amused themselves (being a most *accomplished* rabble) with tinkling a guitar, jingling a harpsicord, whistling on a flute, viewing the busts of the ancients, reading Milton, Pope, Seneca, and some other *obsolete* authors—the Whole Duty of Man was absent.

In short, not only the particulars above-mentioned were taken away, but all the furniture, papers, wearing-apparel, and every thing that could be torn from the brick walls.—And when I had the *assurance* to enquire the cause of such liberty, it was answered, Mr. Priddle was my lawful creditor, and had taken that method

thod to pay himself.—Mr. Priddle and I seemed of opposite opinions on the simple question, debt or no debt—and the matter was left to the determination of the court of King's-Bench.—That determination was made last term, so far in my favour, that the judgment is set aside—the sheriffs ordered to restore my property—Mr. Priddle ordered to pay my cost.—And what still CONFIRMS the *legality* of *his demand*, he stands attached by the court for an abuse of its process—whether he is guilty of such abuse or not, will appear from the following affidavit :

THE 18th day of June last, to the best of the deponent's remembrance of the time, being the last day of last Trinity term, except one, he, the deponent, received a note in writing from Mr. Jacobs, the attorney, informing the deponent, that a notice, in writing, in a cause wherein Mr. Priddle was said to be plaintiff, and the deponent defendant, had been just then left for him, the said Mr. Jacobs, and directed to him as the deponent's attorney, but dated the 15th June, specifying, that a declaration was filed against this deponent, at the said Priddle's suit,
in

in an action of trespass upon the case and several promises, and that the deponent was required to plead thereto in four days; and intimating his the said Mr. Jacobs's surprise thereat, he, the said Jacobs, saying he knew nothing of any such action, and thereby desired the deponent to enquire into the matter thereof, or to that effect.—And the deponent further saith, that in a few hours afterwards he, the deponent, was informed, that the said Mr. Priddle, with James Bolland, some time ago an officer to the sheriff of Middlesex (but who, as the deponent is informed and believes, was at that very time suspended for misconduct, and hath not since been permitted to act as an officer) and divers other persons went to the deponent's said chambers on the said 18th day of June, and that Mr. Bolland broke open all the inner doors thereof, and levied an execution at Mr. Priddle's suit, on the whole of the said goods and furniture there, as the goods and furniture of the deponent's, by virtue of a warrant upon a writ of *Fieri Facias*, appearing to issue on judgment, received by the said Mr. Priddle against the deponent, in debt and market to levy 194 l. 10 s. and returnable the then next day; and that Bolland,

after

after such levy, took the keys of the outer doors from the deponent's servant, and then left or more men in possession of the said goods and furniture.--- And the deponent being greatly surprized at such information, caused enquiry to be made if the said Mr. Priddle had received any such judgment, and in what manner, and for what pretended cause of action, or under what shadow of pretence he had sued out such writ of *Fi Fa*, and was informed, and believes, that Mr. Priddle in Easter vacation last, sued out an attachment of privilege, at his own suit, against this deponent, and two other persons in London returnable the first return in Trinity term; and that common bail was filed for the deponent in the said term, at the said Mr. Priddle's suit, with the name of Jacobs thereto, as the deponent's attorney;---and that Mr. Priddle had, in the same term, filed a declaration against the deponent at his own suit, in debt, upon a *mutuatus*, for 190 l. money borrowed, and had assigned judgment upon the said declaration for want of a plea, and sued out the said *Fi Fa* thereon, and had also filed another declaration, at his own suit, against the deponent, of one hundred and forty--- folios as indorsee of several

ral bills of exchange or notes of the deponent's, or with his name thereon, or thereto ; all which bills or notes the deponent verily believes bear date respectively several years ago ; and that subsequent to the making thereof, the deponent hath obtained a certificate under a commission of bankruptcy against him.—And the deponent further saith, that he thereupon sent to Mr. Jacobs thereabout, who wrote for answer, that he, the said Jacobs, never heard of Mr. Priddle's action against the deponent, till the day the execution was levied, when he, the said Jacobs, received the notice alluded to in his former letter ; that he had since seen Mr. Priddle, and that Mr. Priddle had promised to do nothing till he, the said Jacobs, had seen this deponent, or to that effect—and which account of the said Mr. Jacobs, he, the deponent, verily believes to be true. And the deponent further saith, that he never borrowed any money whatsoever of Mr. Priddle, or ever executed any warrant of attorney to him to confess judgment in any such action, or is, or ever was, to his, the deponent's knowledge or belief, indebted to Mr. Priddle ;—and positively saith, that he, the deponent, never gave the said Mr. Jacobs, or any

H other

other person, any authority or direction to appear for him; the deponent, at the plaintiff's suit; and that he, this deponent, was not served with, or ever heard of the said writ or process, or ever received any information that any such writ or process, or any writ or process had been sued out at the said Mr. Priddle's suit against this deponent; or ever received any notice, or ever heard of any declarations or declaration being filed against the deponent at the said plaintiff's suit, or any other proceedings against him, the deponent, therein, till after the said *Fi Fa* was issued and executed; as aforesaid, save from the said Mr. Jacobs's said first letter, and which he received but a few hours before the said levy was made, as aforesaid. And the deponent verily believes, that Mr. Priddle being determined to get possession of the deponent's said goods and furniture, and relying on the deponent's inability, being a bankrupt, as aforesaid, to call him, the said Mr. Priddle, to account for the same; either did himself file commission-bail for the deponent at his suit, and put the name of Jacobs as the deponent's attorney thereto, without the said Jacobs knowledge or consent; or that he, the said Mr. Priddle, procured some person

son so to do; and the said Mr. Priddle so declared in debt to get execution, without the tedious form of executing a writ of inquiry of damages, and giving a rule thereon; and did not give either the said Mr. Jacobs or the deponent, any notice or information of the said declaration in debt being filed, that the deponent might not wage his law, or otherwise defend himself against the same, and thereby prevent him, the said Mr. Priddle, from getting possession of the deponent's goods and furniture, as aforesaid. And this deponent further saith, that upon his enquiring how Mr. Bolland was empowered and became employed to levy the said execution (being suspended as aforesaid) he, the deponent, was informed, and verily believes, that Mr. Priddle, being aware that none of the sheriffs bailiffs would suit his purpose, in the said business, so well as Bolland, went himself to the sheriffs office with the said *Fi Fa*, and insisted that a writ thereon should be made to Bolland; and that the clerks refusing so to do, that he, the said Mr. Priddle, to obtain the same, gave some indemnity, or undertaking, to save the sheriff harmless, respecting the said business. And the deponent further saith, he hath been informed, and verily believes,

that after Mr. Bolland had taken possession of the said goods and furniture, under the pretence, and in the manner aforesaid, he, the said Bolland, kept from ten to fifteen, and sometimes more men in possession of the same—and that such men behaved extremely ill, and committed great outrages and violence therein; and that Mr. Bolland, after continuing in possession six or seven days in that manner, stripped the said chambers, and carried the whole of the said goods and furniture, together with all the deponent's books, papers, writings, and memorandums of great consequence to the deponent, away, and then turned the deponent's said maid-servant out of the chambers—locked up the same, and took away the keys thereof; and that he hath ever since kept and still keeps the same.—And the deponent is also informed and believes, that although the Sheriff hath not made any bill of sale, or other disposal of the said goods and furniture, that Mr. Bolland hath permitted a considerable part thereof to be taken away by the said Mr. Priddle, and several other persons.—And the deponent further saith, he hath been informed, and believes, that a special plea is filed for the deponent to the said declaration on promises (but without

out a counsel's name thereto) with the name of Jacobs, as the attorney for the deponent thereon; but doth not believe the said Jacobs filed, or caused the said plea to be filed, he, the deponent, not having given the said Jacobs any directions so to do, or to take such declaration out of the office.

In the } Priddle, Gentleman, one, &c.
King's-Bench. } against Holloway.

Richard Jacobs, gentleman, maketh oath, and saith, that on the 18th day of June last, he received a notice, in writing, in this cause, purporting, that a declaration was filed in an action of trespass upon the lease, and requiring the defendant to plead thereto in four days, otherwise judgment.—And this deponent being much surprised thereat, sent immediately to Mr. Robert Holloway (supposing him to be the defendant) advising him thereof; and in a short time afterwards received a line from him, acknowledging the receipt of the deponent's message; and informing this deponent, that he, the said Mr. Holloway, was soon afterwards made acquainted with its contents in the fullest manner, or to that effect. And this deponent

ponent further saith, on the 19th day of June, aforesaid, he, this deponent, saw one of Mr. Priddle's clerks, and upon enquiring of him about the said notice, and desiring him to acquaint Mr. Priddle, that this deponent was not concerned for the defendant as his attorney;—he, the said clerk, informed this deponent, that Mr. Priddle had signed judgment in an action at his suit against Mr. Holloway, and had levied an execution thereon, in his chambers, the day before, or to that effect. And this deponent, on the next day, met Mr. Priddle, and addressing him in the like manner, and telling him to the like purport, he, the said Mr. Priddle, replied, that he thought this deponent was concerned for the defendant, for that this deponent's name appeared on the bail-piece filed for the defendant, at his, the said Mr. Priddle's suit, as the defendant's attorney; and that one Wilson had informed him, the said Mr. Priddle, that this deponent was concerned for the defendant, as his attorney, or to that effect; but Mr. Priddle did not inform this deponent, that he, the said Mr. Priddle, had levied such execution. And this deponent further saith, that he, this deponent, was never employed by the defendant, to file bail

bail for him at the plaintiff's suit, or otherwise defend him in the said action; nor did he, this deponent, or any person for him, by his direction, or with his knowledge, privity, or consent, file bail for the said defendant, at the suit of the said plaintiff, or any other person; nor did he, this deponent, ever see, or was ever informed of any writ or process being sued out by the said plaintiff against the defendant; or he, this deponent, or any person belonging to him, to his knowledge or belief, ever receive or hear of any other notice in the said cause, than the notice aforesaid; or had any other knowledge or information thereof, or of any proceedings at the plaintiff's suit against the defendant, till after the said execution was levied, as aforesaid, than from the said notice.—And this deponent further saith, he is informed, by a letter from Mr. Holloway, that a special plea is filed for him, the said Mr. Holloway, to the said declaration, at the plaintiff's suit, in trespass upon the case, with this deponent's name, as the attorney to such plea; but the deponent saith, he did not either file, or cause the said plea to be filed, or ever heard thereof, till he received such information from the said Mr. Holloway;
nor

nor hath the deponent appeared, or acted, in any respect as attorney for the said Mr. Holloway in the said action, or had any other knowledge thereof, than as afore-said.

On the above affidavits, with many more in support of the charges, the motion, was made, and Mr. Priddle ordered to shew cause the first day of the ensuing term.—When that term came, and was far advanced, Mr. Hughes, his clerk, enlarges the rule, upon an affidavit, that *Mr. Priddle, and his lady, were in Wales—that the roads were very dirty, which impeded his journey.*—By this, and fifty other tricks of the like nature, the matter was put off till the very last day of the same term—when Mr. Priddle endeavoured to shew cause by his counsel, with an affidavit of one hundred and thirty sheets.—His *worthy* colleague, Bolland, followed his example, and attempted to shew cause by his counsel—and now, for a few moments, the affair became truly laughable. Mr. DUNNING (MY counsel.)—“ My Lords, my two learned brethren are, on this occasion, the representatives of two *gentlemen* well known to your Lordships—Messrs. Bolland and Priddle.—My Lords,
Mr.

Mr. Priddle acquaints your Lordships, he could not come from Wales, because the roads are dirty.—I believe your Lordships are not to learn; all roads are dirty that Priddle travels: However, my Lords, notwithstanding the dirt, I believe he will soon return to Wales again.

Mr. Bolland, your Lordships remember to have seen a few days ago, and thought proper to send him from whence he came (the Compter).—He will TRAVEL too, my Lords, but not *quite* so far as Wales," &c. &c.—The facetious and learned advocate was not void of truth in the conjecture relative to Bolland—his next journey was indeed very short of Wales; nor do I believe the travels of his surviving co-partner will exceed Paddington on some future excursion.—If I mistake not, Sir John, forgery is the straight road.—I shall therefore try how far it will help him on his journey.

It is surprising, Sir John, that when I have recounted the nature of his robbery on me (even to attornies) I cannot invest my hearers with an idea of the matter.—Indeed I think a want of comprehension, in this instance, is a compliment to the HEART, though none to the HEAD; nor do I believe my readers, at large, will dis-

cover more sagacity. A recital, therefore, of a few material steps, necessary to be taken in such a business, will, in some measure, aid an explanation.

When Mr. Priddle has resolved on the gains of the day, and pointed out the mart of commerce to his different clerks, factors, and porters, the executive part seems the next object of attention. He therefore sues out a writ (no matter for what sum, that particular is, in general, guided by his own necessity, or the amount of the property he is about to invade).—This writ is committed to the care of a PROPER person, who returns in a short time, and makes OATH that he has served the defendant with a true copy thereof, (though, by the bye, both his person and place of abode is totally unknown to this *pious* son of perdition) a declaration is filed in the office—a plea likewise demanded—a writ of enquiry executed—judgment signed—and execution taken out instantly; all which the defendant is as ignorant of, as he was of the SERVICE. And the matter is generally contrived so as to have the *Fi Fa* levied the last day of a term, that no court may be open for an enquiry. In this concise way, hundreds are annually plundered of their all; and should they, like me,

attempt to call the rascal to account—why, ten or twenty writs are taken out to secure the person, who is sent to prison to repent such daring *presumption*. These horrid depredations, Sir John, originate in that dreadful and most alarming vice, perjury, on which subject I shall not presume to comment, after it has been treated with such extensive abilities, and its horrid tendencies painted, with such powerful energy, to the Grand Jury of Westminster, which will remain, till time shall be no more, as a perpetual honour to Sir John Fielding. I shall only observe, that more of this commodity is expended in one *year*, in one *house*, and by one *man*, than Duke's-Place, Woolpack-alley, and the Old Bailey can supply in an age.—In short, Sir John, melt down all the Jews in Christendom, drain off the *superfluous* dress of honesty, and the villainy left, will not be sufficient to create one Priddle, or counteract his perjury.—I am sorry to quit you, Sir John, for such infamous company; but, by your leave, I must turn to Priddle for a moment, and demand his answer to a few questions. And as I have descended to this tête à tête, he may expect to be treated like a gentleman.—You have, Mr. Priddle, in the course of your appeal to

the public, declared, that I stand indebted to you in the sum of 190 l. I should have thought, Sir, that it was incumbent on you to have offered some shadow of proof in support of the assertion. However, I think myself possessed by much the best end of the argument—shall therefore throw some trifles into your scale.—I will, for argument sake, admit your debt of 190 l. yet was it not an excessive and unlawful levy to take 600 l. ? Was it more legal, or more equitable, to take the wearing-apparel of a lady, who happened to be in the chambers, together with all her papers, books, and many other things of infinite consequence, which the law does not even deem effects ? Was it more consistent with law or equity, to turn my servant out of the chambers, take the keys away, and load me with the rent of forty guineas, *per annum*, for this twelve-month past ? Or is it any mitigation of the offence to rifle my papers, destroy manuscript books ready for publication, steal notes, with my name upon them, and now set the same up as just demands against me ? Was it, Sir, a fair mode of procedure, after the levy, to dispose of the property without the sheriffs bill of sale, which is, by the law, felony ?

Was

Was it a transaction worthy an honest man, when a broker came to take an inventory of the effects, to arrest him? Or do you think prevailing on the poor deluded Beeford to swear a debt against another person, who was likewise assisting me, (though she had never heard of his name) can add any lustre to your case?—And now, Sir, to convince the public, that I am far from being your superior in art, or chicane, I do hereby solemnly declare my intention of paying any demand you can equitably make upon me—if you have any bill for *business* done, *money* lent, or *any* other claim, supported by such vouchers as shall be deemed equitable and just, I pledge myself to the public, that it shall be instantly discharged. I have, Sir, offered thus much in compassion to your situation; and, I do protest, I shall receive more satisfaction from a conviction of my own error, than a fatal confirmation of your guilt.

I shall now, Sir John, re-assume my subject, and conclude this letter with a degree of seriousness.—It is really lamentable that abilities, like Priddle's, should be prostituted to the most shameful purposes; nor is it a consideration less dreadful, that a capacity of such extent, should comprehend

hend more mischief than the leg
body of the whole kingdom can re
when perpetrated.—To these obser
I must add some concern, Sir John
I am obliged to finish an essay of 70
without being able to express a favo
sentence in behalf of the principal s
If any thing should hereafter occur, v
in I have been partial to the vices o
Mr. Priddle, I will most readily o
the error, and take an early opportu
do his virtues justice.

It may be considered as some miti
of his crimes, at least with men of h
cast, to enumerate the offences of
If such a plea can be admitted, as an
nation, Mr. Priddle is not destit
comfort.

However alarming, Sir John, the
five hundred Priddles, at this day,
vocation of their profession, whose e
and characters shall be the subject
early, though future address.

In the mean time, Sir John, w
hope that these enormous growing
will become a parliamentary enqui
nothing less will prove a sufficient
to stop the mischief.

I will venture to affirm, Sir John
not a day passes, but many shocking

present themselves of the misery in which unhappy individuals are involved, from a too free toleration of that baneful aconite to society, the rotten branch of the law.

That the robberies described in the course of this letter are numberless and frequent, is not very extraordinary, when we consider the difficulty of detecting the perpetrators, from a want of knowledge in those laws, which prohibits the commission of such pernicious acts. But that the CERTAINTY of detection should be no restraint, is really astonishing. I, who by woeful experience, know every creek, every secret retreat, every subterfuge, every recess and covert of safety for such as commit these outrages under colour of law.

I say, Sir John, if I could not escape—nay, if you are open to such attacks, think what a lamentable situation the more untaught part of the kingdom must be in, who are equally as ignorant of the cause as the remedy.

I must repeat, Sir John, if oppression of this complexion will dare to lift its ponderous arm against such as are thus shielded, how wretched is the condition, how precarious the property and liberty of four-fifths of the nation?

From

From the inroads of every other kind of invader, we guard, by a sort of instinct, both with respect to the animal and human species.—Rats we poison for stealing our corn, foxes for pilfering our poultry, the envenomed reptile is crushed with our heel, and a mad dog arms the whole country, with means and resolution to destroy him.—Nor is more lenity to be met with, in our laws, against such delinquents as offend by the inconsiderable theft of a shilling.—Those we murder by dozens, though urged to a commission of the fact, by the intenseness of hunger, and languishing under the whole catalogue of piercing wants, that human nature is heir to.

Indeed, Sir John, were I to undertake the task of painting, in expressive colours, ALL the miseries occasioned by the infamous members of the law, you would readily conclude, that Providence had created the subjects, at large, for the SOLE USE of LAWYERS, and ordained them to wear pack-saddles, the more easy to sustain weighty panniers, filled with their oppression.

Whilst we live in a continual round of this horrid subjection, it cannot be said we experience more of LIBERTY than the

the MEET found. Liberty and property seem to be synonymous terms, and so interwoven with each other, that the spirit of law, on which genuine liberty is founded, cannot operate in favour of the former, without an absolute conjunction of the latter.—Hence it is that the most abject slave, throughout the territories of Turkey and Barbary, enjoys a blessing we know not of. In these despotic provinces, Sir John, which Englishmen injudiciously affect to hold in contempt, are found no Priddles, no patriots, bailiffs, or hecatombs of butchered debtors; and yet the injured subject, complaining of oppression, obtains redress in its fullest latitude; he views, with exulting eyes, his lordly oppressor expire, amidst the pangs of an ignominious death.—What a happy condition compared to ours?—What a triumph of revenge does an Algerine peasant experience?—What exemplary justice reigns where no laws controul—always ready to be impartially administered alike to the peasant and the prince. In short, every nation under the sun seems happy in a mode of justice—this land of boasted liberty and perverted laws excepted. Neither our laws nor our liberty can insure us redress, for

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the

the most grievous wrongs, if we are destitute of property. The only CERTAIN remedy to the worst evil, is a tame submission to the original injury—to seek redress through the dark winding intricacies of law, is but to compleat the misery we strive to avoid; and, in effect, rendering ourselves the bond slave of our wealthy opponent. The law of England, though intentionally the most merciful, humane, equitable, and just code in the known world, is, in the hands of unworthy practitioners, a kind of national or hereditary curse.—What is law, in the present acceptance of the word, but the trammels of injustice, which, like a NIGHTMARE, holds the sense in captivity, torturing with imaginary pains, through the tedious night, and awaking us to a reality of disappointment, beggary, and oppression.

I am, Sir John, far from wishing to throw a stigma on the honourable part of the profession---such a reflection would be as illiberal as unjust.—Yet, certain it is, that the inns of court want WEEDING---or to speak in proper language, the ROOKERY IS FULL FLEDGED.

However,

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However, Sir John, I am determined to attempt a temporary relief for those who groan under such cruel and complicated afflictions ; nor shall I either despair of success or assistance, whilst I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Sir John,

Your most devoted servant,

Soho-square,
May 5th, 1772.

R. HOLLOWAY.

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POST-

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1873
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the matter of the ...
I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. H. ...

Very respectfully,
J. H. ...

W. H. ...

W. H. ...

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the foregoing letter went to press, another capital robbery has been attempted on Mr. Ballamy. I would gratify you, Sir John, with the particulars; but the affair has been managed with such dexterity, that the ostensible actors, in this piratical farce, have retreated into the moon *. Indeed their *pious* vice-agent, Mr. Hufsey, another attorney, to the *honour* of the profession, is found on earth, emulating the daring acts of a Priddle.—How far he will fall short, or exceed his great preceptor, in assiduity, activity, inclination, and abilities, will

* I Cannot find this *amiable* attorney's clients, upon whose oath Ballamy has been sued to execution, and the same levied the 13th instant for 73 l. which sum I have advised Mr. Ballamy to pay into the hands of the sheriff, and have filed a bill for an injunction, by which the intended plunder will remain undivided for the present, and in the end revert to its lawful owner, Mr. Ballamy.

manifest

manifest itself in the course of the *equitable* business he is engaged in.—For the present, I shall only observe, Sir John, that though Tyburn may MISS ITS LOAD on this occasion, we are in a fair way of furnishing a GROVE OF PILLORIES.

21st May, 1772.

R. H.

SINCE the foregoing letter went to press, another capital robbery has been attempted on Mr. Ballymore. I would greatly you, Sir John, with the permission of the court, but the affair has been managed with such dexterity that the offence above, in this particular, have retreated into the law. Indeed their own vice-agent, I am informed, another attorney, to the contrary of the protection is found on every side, and during acts of a printer—how far he will fall there, or exceed his great propensity in activity, inclination, and abilities will

F I N I S

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I cannot but be sensible that the whole with Ballymore has been told to execution, and the time having the 1st instant for 1771, which I have added Mr. Ballymore to pay into the hands of the court, and have that a bill for an injunction, by which the intended power will remain undisturbed for the present, and in the end revert to its lawful owner, Mr. Ballymore.

Respectfully

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